

Dunleer Parish Bulletin

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Issue Date May 2nd

Sat May 1 st 7 30 Av	Paddy and Rosie Lane Matthew and Mary Matthews John, Matthew, Séan and Carmel Flood. John and Kaye Durnin.
Sun May 2 nd 11 30 Av	M Mind Brigid Larkin. Av Paddy Corbally Paddy and Maura McGrory Nicky and Maureen Cunningham Séan and Monica Hand.
Fri May 7 th 10a.m. Av	Imelda Pluck
Sat May 8 th 7 30 Av	Peggy Landy Bartle and Sarah Landy and dec'd. Nano McGahon. Eugene and Delia Dolan. Dec'd of Dolan and Morgan families.
Sun May 9 th 11 30a.m.	Month's Mind Gary Crohan Rivervale and Donaghmede.

When Jesus chose an image to teach his disciples something of the reality of being a disciple, he chose his image carefully. He also chose images which were familiar to those who were listening to him, like the image used last week of a shepherd and sheep. The other image he used, that of the vine, though familiar to them too, was equally profound.

The vine was an ancient symbol of God's people. As the shamrock or the harp is to us, the vine represented to the Hebrew people an image of themselves and their history. It was so significant and prominent that it had been carved in stone on the facade of the temple in Jerusalem.

People understood their story or their history as the accounts of what God had done for them down through the generations. This story and the ideals which the people aspired to were often given form in images of the vine and in stories like the parable of the vine that they had been taught. This, they had been told, was a vine that had been lifted and transplanted into a fertile place. It had been watered and fed generously by its tender, and pruned carefully by the instruction given to it and by the experience of suffering and trial. It had not responded as it might, by producing good fruit and sweet wine but had produced only inferior and sour grapes, the fruits of unfaithfulness and disobedience. It had been invaded and trampled on and had grown wild for want of pruning. God's expectations had been dashed despite the many reprieves and second chances given to the vine and its stewards. Now the vine was to be given a radical new start, handed over to a new steward and to a new people who would produce the fruits expected.

In baptism we are grafted onto this new vine. The vine is spread widely and its branches reach out generously. Its roots run deep and its leaves grow high, and each part contributes to the production of good fruit. Jesus is the vine and the Father is the vinedresser. Each branch is pruned by the Word of God and by the experience of trying to follow Christ, by discipleship. Dead wood is pruned and cut off and productive parts are pruned carefully so as to bear even more fruit. The vine is one with all its parts and each part draws life and gives life. We are in Jesus and Jesus is in us.

Make your home in me, he says, as I make mine in you. It is together we work out our salvation, and it is in communion that we share eternal life. Separate from God, our lives are meaningless and wither away; separation and aloneness are the inheritance of those who cut themselves off from God and from neighbour. In Jesus, and with the Father and the Spirit, sharing the communion of the Trinity and in communion with each other, we can bear much pruning, achieve much growth and harvest much fruit. 'It is to the glory of my father', said Christ, 'that you should bear much fruit, and then you will be my disciples'.

